

**Contact:** Tammy Wilson, Public Information Officer

828-465-8661, [twilson@catawbacountync.gov](mailto:twilson@catawbacountync.gov)

**Organization:** Catawba County Library System, Newton, NC

828-465-8664 [www.catawbacountync.gov/library](http://www.catawbacountync.gov/library)



For Immediate Release:

---

LIBRARY COLUMN

## Resolve to make reading a priority in 2015

**Newton, NC, Jan. 5, 2014:**

**By Tammy Wilson**  
**Public Information Officer**  
**Catawba County Library System**

Instagram, Twitter, TiVo, texting. How can anyone read books these days with so many distractions?

Ten years ago, author Steve Leveen published *The Little Guide to Your Well-Read Life*. His advice is as relevant today as it was then. Leveen, by the way, is the founder of Levenger's, a company that sells tools such as bookmarks and pens—things to make reading more simple and fun.

The first rule is to take control. Books, like types of candy, are a matter of taste. Leveen gives you permission to not like every book you pick up.

New York University professor Atwood H. Townsend wrote in his *Good Reading: A Helpful Guide for Serious Readers*, "Never force yourself to read a book that you do not enjoy. There are so many good books in the world that it is foolish to waste time on one that does not give you pleasure and profit."

Townsend penned that advice about 75 years ago, when America was producing about 10,000 books a year. Today the number is nearly 300,000. The numbers alone beg us to be discriminating. Reading lists help. If you hear of a particular title in a review or from a trusted friend, note that book and author for the next time you visit the library. Likewise, keep a log of what you've read. There's nothing more frustrating than not being able to recall book titles and authors you wish to share with others.

Social networks such as Goodreads or Librarything.com are options to swap reading ideas. Likewise, try Gale's Books and Authors database, available on the Catawba County Library website. Log on to [www.catawbacountync.gov/library](http://www.catawbacountync.gov/library) and click on eResources at the right. This database can help you discover new authors and titles.

There's no point feeling guilty about not having read every book you own or every book you want to read. *Maturity* is realizing that you may never get to certain titles. And just because a book has won an award doesn't make it a good one for you. Some books naturally resonate with a reader; others do not.

Consider audio books or downloadable eBooks. Seasoned readers know that travel and exercise time can be turned into "reading" hours with eBooks and audiobooks. In fact, some works are more enjoyable as read by the author or a professional actor. Your library has a selection of these books to choose from.

Read aloud to family members. Discover a book you missed as a child by reading it to a youngster.

Professional readers give a book 50 pages. If it doesn't grab them by then, they give it up. So should you. Conditioned by that same teacher, we feel guilty about not finishing a book, but the time you waste trying to engage in a boring tome could be better spent exploring a book you'd enjoy. Or, you may want to use the rule by Nancy Pearl, librarian and author of *Book Lust* and *More Book Lust*. For every year over 50, subtract one page. Thus, a 75-year-old gives a book only 25 pages to prove itself. As you mature, you're quicker and surer about what you like.

Contact Tammy Wilson at the library, [twilson@catawbacountync.gov](mailto:twilson@catawbacountync.gov)

###



**About:** The Catawba County Library System, headquartered in Newton, NC, serves the citizens of Catawba County with seven branches throughout the county and is a year-round, integral provider of early literacy and lifelong learning. In addition to traditional services, the system provides a full complement of computer and digital services, classes and support to bridge the digital divide, empower job seekers, and enhance community quality of life and economic health.